

# COMMUNITY DESIGN BY MESENSEI



# BUILDING STRONG AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

Encountering a vibrant community might feel like there is something magical in the air –and there is— it is the human spirit at its best. Instead of sorcery, this community design kit helps you to approach community building methodologically.

Communities are one of the most natural ways for us humans to come together and enjoy each others company. When set in motion toward a shared purpose, communities can also achieve amazing outcomes with very limited resources.

Communities come in all shapes and sizes and they can be formed spontaneously, or deliberately, around almost any topic, interest, theme, cause, or personality imaginable. In marketing and entertainment communities have been used to promote, sell products and create celebrities with cult like following.

Our community design methodology is developed and tested in context of mission driven communities with emphasis on ecosystem facilitation and value co-creation. Typical examples are found in domains of Science, Innovation and Technology and Social projects. These include university research consortiums, innovation ecosystems, and entrepreneurship support programs. Common to them all are loose cross-organisational

structures and emphasis on voluntary contributions for a common purpose.

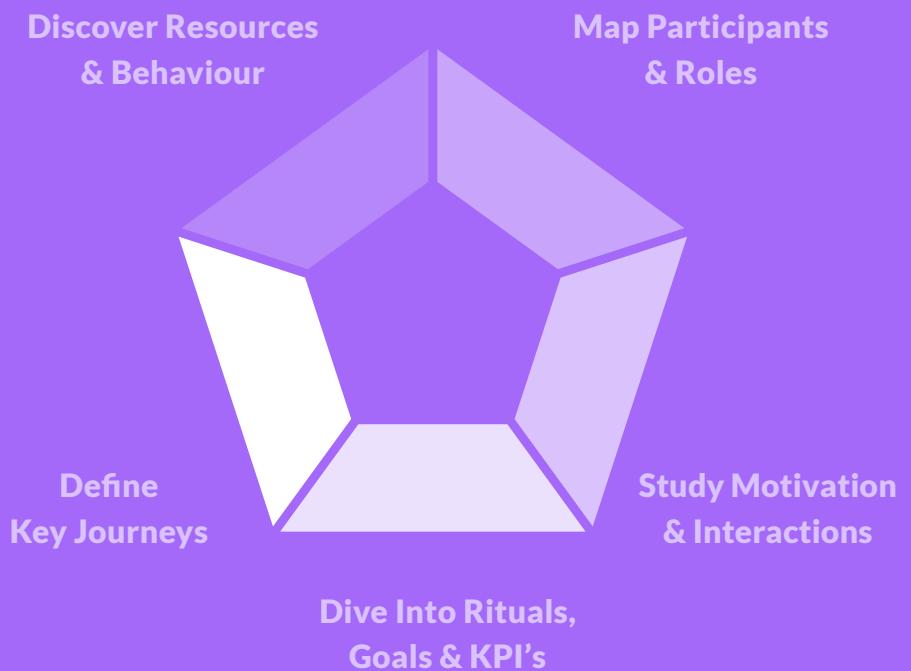
Instead of power verticals, where direct command and control can be used, success of such communities is often dependent on the effectiveness of community managers. This kit is dedicated for them. We know from experience that our method is helpful in scenarios where traditional centralised top-down management and communication models are ineffective –or at worst harmful— and a community manager feels there is a need to explore alternative models.

This kit explains how to use some of the basic community design tools. It is intended for professional –and aspiring— community managers who need to think about roles and value creation of their community.

We hope you find the kit useful. We also look forward to hear more about you and your community. If there is anything we can do to help you to build a strong and

engaged community, please do not hesitate to contact our community design team.

To read more about our community design cases, visit  
[www.mesensei.com](http://www.mesensei.com)



# Free Sample **COMMUNITY PARTICIPANT CANVAS**

The Participant Canvas is one of the core canvases in our Community Design Process. It takes a detailed look into a single role, which is relevant for the community. The purpose is to define clearly what function this role has in the community.

The canvas ask to write a summary description of the role as a short narrative, which can be used to communicate about the role for example in communication materials and recruitment discussions.

It also requires you to define clearly what expectations there are for a person to be able to assume this role, how this role brings value to the community, what motivations there could be for someone to perform this role, and are there any concrete incentives/perks to offer.

This helps you to understand how to attract members and keep them engaged. It also helps to explore the role critically. If the role is very demanding, but does not offer any value in exchange there is a considerable risk that getting the intended people to assume this role isn't sustainable in the long run —or their recruitment fails completely.

Ideally, the roles in the community are reciprocal and balanced: if a participant gives a lot of value they should receive value back and vice versa.

If there is an obvious and significant imbalance between giving and gaining, consider use of paid workers and sponsorship packages. For example: if a role is so demanding that it is an equivalent of a part time / full time job, consider making it into a paid position. Conversely, if an individual or a business gets significant financial value from the community, e.g. acquires new customers, makes valuable recruitments frequently, etc. consider introducing sponsorship / revenue share / success fee deals.

Some communities offer frequent and valuable exchanges to its participants. These include mentoring, coaching, consultancy, workshopping, introductions, document reviews and acquisition of new members and so on. If this value exchange is frequent and large scale, your community might have the potential to take form as a local economy. If you are interested in exploring local economies please contact our team about Ecosystem Participants and Roles and Motivation Matrix canvasses.

A photograph showing a group of students in a classroom setting. One student in the foreground is holding a large sheet of paper, while others are writing on it with pens. The scene conveys a sense of teamwork and collaboration.

# HOW TO FILL CANVAS?

# Community Participant Canvas v 1.0

Designed for

Designed by

Date

| Description   | Experience   | Knowledge                                    | Motivations   | Incentives   |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| The key attributes of a person who can fill this role   | How should the participant experience the community  | Knowledge that is valuable for the community | Primary motivation for the participant to fill this role. | Incentives, which help to boost the motivation to sign-up & excel in this role |
| <b>Role</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> e.g "Mentor"<br><input type="checkbox"/> e.g "Student"<br><input type="checkbox"/> e.g "Media"<br><input type="checkbox"/> e.g "Volunteer"<br><input type="checkbox"/> etc. | <b>Key Behavior</b><br>Describe the key behavior of this participant type.                                       |  |   |  |
| <b>Gives (value)</b><br>Concrete value the presence of this role brings to the community  | <b>Gains (value)</b><br>Concrete value the participant should expect to gain if they fill their role as expected |  |   |  |



## Description of the Role

Write a summary of the essentials of this role in a brief narrative format. Think about the key attributes of a person who can fill this role, what is expected of them in this role, how they are selected, what is their main motivation, etc.



e.g. "Mentors are experienced entrepreneurs and investors who want to give back to the community by helping the next generation. They are selected based on their track record and recommendations".

**Tip!** In a workshop select one person to describe this role on a general level to other members verbally. This makes sure everyone is roughly on the same page about this role and you have a frame in place, e.g. "mentors must be volunteers, because we can't afford to pay them". Then move on to and fill in the details. Once the details are worked out, re-write the narrative and try to capture the essentials. If this seems very difficult you might want to consider taking some time to dig deeper in to understanding this role better. Go make some interviews, check out benchmarks from other communities how they do, or reach out to community design experts for assistance.

## Experience

How does a person in this role experience the participation into this community. What are the main touch points, feelings & emotions.



e.g. "Mentors are treated as VIP's to make them feel special. During the event they will have priority registration and exclusive lounge access. They are promoted in the communication materials with praise for their experience and effort".

## Requirements for the Role

Define requirements which are specific enough for selecting people to fill the role.



e.g. "Mentors must have founded a company or made investments as an angel or VC. They also must have at least two positive referrals from the ecosystem and be willing to volunteer".

## Key Behaviour

Describe here how the role is played out and what type of actions are expected.



e.g. "Mentors promote the community and attract new members and mentors. They listen and help young members by sharing their own experiences and by answering questions in a positive & friendly manner."

## Motivations

Describe what should motivate someone to assume this role.  
Note! Its important to also consider any "wrong motives" to identify any threats and can they be prevented by defining requirements.



e.g. "Mentors should be motivated by the desire to give back to the community, making of new connections and joy of teaching. They might also enjoy the opportunity to lift up their prestige, and enjoy the special treatment".

## Incentives

Define clear incentives, which could/should/must be used to boost the motivation to enrol and excel in this role. In contrast to more abstract motivations incentives are concrete and instantly recognisable.



e.g. "Mentors are picked up from the airport personally, they get free tickets, and invitation to VIP meet-up with free drinks"

## Gives

Summarise the concrete value the presence of this role brings to the community.



e.g. "Famous mentors provide highly valuable content to the event. They increase the prestige of the event and drive up the ticket sales. Without them the event will not happen".

## Gains

Summarise what a person in this role gains in exchange.

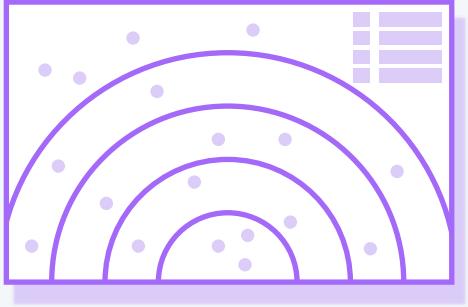


e.g. "Mentors will boost their profile, gain new insights, make at least 10 valuable new contacts and have great fun attending the event free of charge with free drinks included."

**Tip!** Consider if the summaries of Give/Gain are balanced. If the role doesn't seem attractive consider better incentives. If the role gains tremendous value, consider asking them to do more for the community.

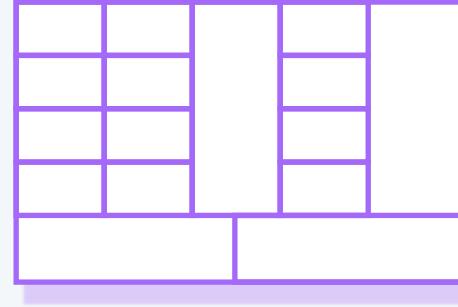
A group of diverse people are gathered in a workshop or meeting room. In the foreground, a person with short blonde hair and glasses is looking towards the left. Behind them, several other individuals are visible, including a man with a beard and a woman in a red plaid shirt. On the left side of the frame, a whiteboard is partially visible, covered with numerous colorful sticky notes in various colors like orange, yellow, green, and purple. The scene suggests a collaborative environment where ideas are being shared and organized.

**WE HELP YOU TO BUILD  
A STRONG AND ENGAGED  
COMMUNITY**



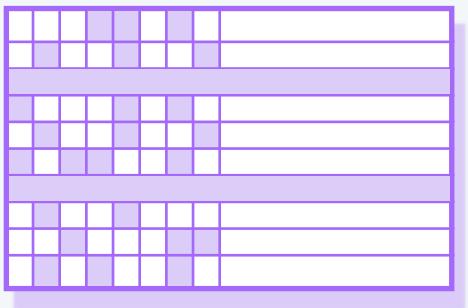
## Ecosystem Participants & Roles

*Role-based view on the community and stakeholders. It is used in mapping out the participant roles and how they are related to the mission of the community.*



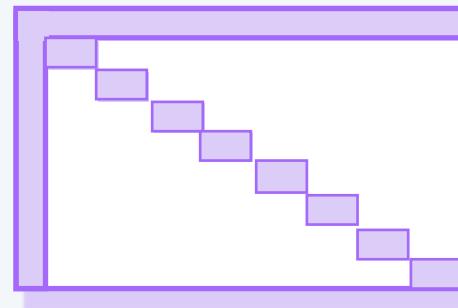
## Community Foundation Canvas

*High level conceptual and strategic view on the community. It helps to define what is the purpose of the community, why does it matter, and how to measure success & impact.*



## Steps and Milestones

*Action plan for implementation. This canvas helps in building up a community by taking the right steps in the right sequence to avoid stepping on any toes & missing out on vital rituals.*



## Ecosystem Motivation Matrix

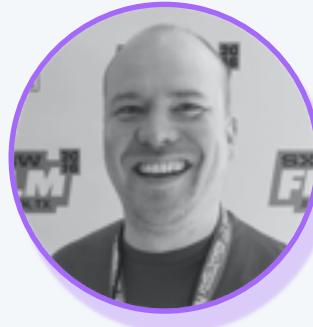
*Relational view on participant motivations. This matrix is used for heavy duty mapping of participant give-get relations within the community. It is used to unlock the full potential of ecosystem dynamics.*

# GET IN TOUCH!

*Would you like to know more about  
Community Design, or need some help  
to facilitate your own workshop?*

*Interested in the Community Design  
methodology, our technology or  
Mesensei in General?*

*Don't hesitate to contact us!*



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